

Habitat

2004 Annual Report

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources



Wildlife Habitat Conservation

Annual Report

FY 2004 (July 1, 2003–June 30, 2004)

Utah Habitat Initiative

State and federal agency administrators, who meet regularly as the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development, signed off on a resolution in 2004 to cooperate in a major conservation effort to improve sagebrush steppe and riparian habitats in priority areas statewide. As a result, a conservation partner-

ship is developing among federal and state natural resources agencies, conservation organizations, private landowners and others that is unprecedented in Utah's history.

Success will be measured in watershed-related benefits (improved water quality, water quantity, timing and duration of stream flows), fewer at-risk wildlife populations, economically viable

ranching operations, productive big game winter ranges, and other by-products of healthy rangelands and riparian areas. Many of the projects identified in this annual report represent efforts to address the conservation needs in these important areas.

Habitat conservation expenditures

Wildlife Habitat Account

In 1995, the Utah Legislature established a separate account within the Division of Wildlife Resources to fund fish and wildlife habitat conservation and improve public access for hunting and fishing. The legislation also created the Habitat Council to guide the DWR in how these funds should be used. A portion of the revenue received from the sale of every license, permit, stamp and certificate of registration is placed directly into the Wildlife Habitat Account.

Wildlife Habitat Account (Fund 174) expenditures totaled \$2,291,447

Cover: Dead and dying sagebrush in Grand County.

Below: The new Great Basin Research Center in Ephraim.



in FY 2004. The percent breakdown by program was as follows: Upland Game (nine percent), Waterfowl (two percent), Big Game (21 percent), Fisheries (63 percent) and Native Species (five percent). The total revenue for FY 2004 (\$1,785,560) plus FY 2003 carryover funds (\$345,000) yielded a FY 2004 budget of \$2,130,560. The difference, \$160,887, was drawn from the Fund 174 bank account, leaving a balance of \$78,573 in reserve. The FY 2005 budget will be the revenue projected for the year (\$1,850,000), since there were no carryover funds from FY 2004.

Blue Ribbon Fishery funds

With assistance from the Blue Ribbon Fishery Advisory Council (BRFAC), the DWR carries out a program to identify, enhance and protect Utah waters and watersheds which provide Blue Ribbon quality angling experiences for the public. Funding comes from a portion of the revenue received from the sale of fishing licenses. In FY 2004, Blue Ribbon funding for habitat conservation-related activities totaled \$340,257 (see the "FY 2004 Completed Projects" table).

Conservation permit funds

The DWR has issued conservation permits to generate funds for several wildlife species since 1981. The pro-

gram began with a "high bid permit" for a desert bighorn ram. Through the years the program has expanded to include all big game species, as well as cougar, bear and wild turkeys.

As per administrative rule R657-41b, conservation organizations are eligible for permits that they in turn auction off at their annual meetings. Beginning in FY 2005, 70 percent of the revenue generated from the auctions will be retained by the conservation organizations to fund special projects approved by the director of the DWR. The remaining 30 percent of the revenue will be donated to the DWR and used to fund similar activities. In FY 2004, conservation permit funding for habitat conservation-related activities totaled \$714,485 (see the "FY 2004 Completed Projects" table).

Big Game Enhancement Fund

Hunters can donate to the Big Game Enhancement Fund anytime they apply for a buck deer, bull elk or limited entry big game permit. Donations are used to pay for a variety of big game management activities, including habitat conservation projects. In FY 2004, big game enhancement funding for habitat conservation-related activities totaled \$89,518 (see the "FY 2004 Completed Projects" table).

FISCAL YEAR 2004 HABITAT CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

Stream conservation projects

Weber River — Morgan and Summit Counties

Two projects were completed on private property in the Henefer area. The Paskett and Richins properties involved 3/4 miles of river restoration and angler access. DWR biologists, working along with the division's heavy equipment crew, installed J-hook rock barbs, rootwads and cross-vanes to encourage bank stabilization and create pools for fish. The rock barbs and rootwads were strategically placed to direct high flows away from the bank, form scour holes and create excellent habitat for brown, cutthroat, and rainbow trout, mountain whitefish and other fish species. The DWR also hauled rock and rootwads to structure locations for the Weber River Ranch project, which is scheduled for completion in FY 2005.

The old Ferron Reservoir dam in Sanpete County was repaired.



Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat restoration — Uinta Basin

The DWR teamed with the U. S. Forest Service and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to restore and protect streams vital to the conservation of Colorado River cutthroat trout populations on the Ashley National Forest. Project areas included portions of Mann Creek, South Fork Brownie Creek, West Fork Little Brush Creek and Timber Canyon. Activities included riparian fencing, stream bank stabilization, fish migration barriers, riparian vegetation plantings, road closures, non-native fish removal and re-stocking Colorado River cutthroat trout.

San Pitch River — Sanpete County

A 1/2-mile section of the San Pitch River, which runs through property owned by the Mower Family, was restored to improve stream and riparian habitats for fish and wildlife. Steep eroding banks were sloped and seeded and planted with riparian vegetation. Rock barbs and rootwads were anchored into the banks and positioned to deflect flows away from the banks and create pools for fish. The riparian corridor was fenced to restrict livestock and vehicle access to specially designed crossing structures. Angler access was negotiated as part of the project. Funding partners included

the Mower Family, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Partners For Fish and Wildlife Program) and the Environmental Protection Agency (Sec. 319 funds). Support from the Sanpete Soil Conservation District and the San Pitch Watershed Group was instrumental in obtaining federal funds.

East Fork Sevier River — Garfield County

Work was completed on the first phase of a stream and riparian habitat restoration project on Bureau of Land Management land south of Antimony. The DWR's heavy equipment crew worked with division biologists to shape banks, create floodplains, install structures and relocate the stream channel in several locations along a 1/2-mile reach. This is a cooperative project involving the BLM's Richfield Field Office.

Dam maintenance

Ferron Reservoir — Sanpete County

Ferron Reservoir is near the headwaters of Indian Creek, within the Manti-LaSal National Forest. The dam was constructed in the early 1900s. The reservoir was used for irrigation storage until the 1970s, when the DWR acquired it for a recreational fishery. The repair project involved lowering the

embankment and spillway so the new lake elevation is below a seepage zone.

Community fishing ponds

Spanish Fork Pond Project — Utah County

The DWR worked with Spanish Fork City to incorporate a four-acre community fishing pond and related facilities into their plans for an irrigation reservoir near the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon. Funds were used to purchase and install a fish cleaning station, fishing pier, angler access trail, restrooms, signage, picnic areas, landscaping, an inlet and outlet structure and a parking lot. The city funded the major construction elements: pond excavation, concrete lining and the associated irrigation system. The city will be responsible for ongoing operation and maintenance of the pond and facilities, and the DWR will manage the fishery.

Range restoration projects

The DWR participates with private landowners, public land management agencies (the BLM and U.S. Forest Service), and other state agencies and conservation organizations to protect and restore important wildlife habitats statewide. In many cases, this involves



seeding to reestablish a diverse mix of grasses, forbs and shrubs. In April 2004, the DWR completed construction of the new Great Basin Research Center (GBRC) in Ephraim. The 17,200 square-foot facility includes a 600,000-pound capacity seed warehouse, research greenhouse, seed laboratory, refrigerated seed storage unit for heat-sensitive species, and office space for DWR research biologists.

Funding partners included the U.S. Forest Service, Ephraim City and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

The following table summarizes DWR's seed contributions to range restoration projects on public and private lands in FY 2004. DWR biologists and GBRC personnel coordinated the DWR's involvement, including seed contributions:

FY 2004 seed report summary

Landownership	Number of projects	Acres	Pounds	Seed value
Private Land	29	9,347	91,031	\$167,218.00
SITLA	1	4,600	41,353	\$102,670.00
Forest Service and BLM	5	2,727	28,570	\$ 42,043.00
DWR	17	837	12,410	\$ 35,497.00
Other	4	85	2,867	\$ 10,503.00
Totals	56	17,596	176,231	\$357,931.00

Habitat restoration highlights

Project	Ownership	County	Acres	Pounds
Duck Creek	Private	Rich	2,975	29,976
Cascade Fire	Private	Wasatch	2,112	6,998
Bulldog Fire (Henry Mtns)	SITLA	Garfield	4,600	41,353
Mustang Fire II (Dutch John)	Forest Service	Daggett	1,900	20,017
Rattlesnake Fire	Private	Box Elder	900	16,231
Rabbit Creek Fire	Private	Rich	500	4,324
Salt Creek Mesa Burn	BLM	San Juan	450	4,898



Water Developments

Southern Region West Desert guzzlers — Millard, Beaver, Iron and Washington Counties

DWR personnel installed 10 big game guzzlers in the West Desert portion of the region. Depending on their location, the guzzlers will provide a critical water source for elk, deer, pronghorn, chukar, blue grouse, quail, mourning doves and a variety of other wildlife species. The guzzler design included steel framing to withstand wildfires, four buried 1,700-gallon tanks and a 24-foot by 36-foot collection apron made of galvanized steel. Funding partners included the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the One-Shot Antelope Hunt Foundation (Water For Wildlife Program), and the BLM.

Monticello Face wildlife guzzlers — San Juan County

Four 1,000-gallon guzzlers were installed in aspen and ponderosa pine habitats on the east slope of the Abajo Mountains with the help of National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) volunteers and personnel from the Manti-LaSal National Forest, San Juan County and Monticello City. The areas provide habitat for Merriam's wild turkey, mule deer, elk, and other wildlife species. The guzzlers will be needed to supplement existing spring sources that have been tapped as part of a culinary water system improvement project. The NWTf volunteers will inspect and maintain the guzzlers annually.

Far left: The recently completed 17,000-square-foot Great Basin Research Center seed warehouse will allow the DWR to store and mix 600,000 pounds of seed annually.

Left: The DWR installed J-hook rock barbs, rootwads and cross-vanes to encourage bank stabilization and create pools for fish in sections of the Weber River.

2004 completed projects

Wildlife Habitat Account

Statewide

	Expenditures	Description
Habitat administration	\$108,833	Program administration
Habitat annual report	4,240	Publication
Predator control	71,099	Upland game management
Stream restoration training	34,199	Wildlife hydrology courses
Great Basin Research Center	162,791	Building construction
Waterfowl discretionary projects	6,240	WMA maintenance projects

Northern Region

	Expenditures	Description
WMA maintenance projects	\$43,802	Fences, signs, roads, weed cont.
Ogden Bay WMA		
Upland development	3,838	WMA maintenance activities
Wetland habitat technician	3,838	WMA maintenance activities
Farmington Bay WMA		
Habitat technician	8,571	WMA maintenance activities
Carp control	3,407	Rotenone treatment
Public, Salt Creek, Locomotive Springs WMAs		
Habitat technician	14,035	WMA maintenance activities
Water control structures	18,017	Water level management
Carp control	3,417	Rotenone treatment
Weber River restoration		
Paskett property	7,645	Stream restoration
Richins property	67,907	Stream restoration
Big Spring Creek	4,529	Stream restoration (engineering)
Uintah "U" property develop.	2,910	Trail const., habitat improv.
Davis High School bat colony	1,162	Bat "house" construction
Weber River corridor acquisition	50,000	Ogden City/DWR acquisition

Northeastern Region

	Expenditures	Description
WMA maintenance projects	\$155,214	Fences, signs, roads, weeds
Browns Park WMA maintenance	48,168	WMA maintenance activities
Book Cliffs Roadless Area	8,565	Riparian tree, shrub planting
South Fork Brownie Creek	9,770	Stream restoration
Mann Creek	13,287	Stream restoration
West Fork Little Brush Creek	20,000	Stream restoration
Timber Canyon	26,778	Fish barrier
Gayle Rasmussen guzzler	2,567	Water development

Central Region

	Expenditures	Description
WMA maintenance projects	\$70,502	Fences, signs, roads, weed cont.
Fifth Water riparian improvement	5,625	Riparian fencing
Sanpitch River – Mower property	14,770	Stream restoration
Spanish Fork Pond	289,784	Community fishing pond
Strawberry River restoration	623	Information signs
Yuba Reservoir	22,880	Yellow perch artificial structures

Southern Region

	Expenditures	Description
WMA maintenance projects	\$106,320	Fences, signs, roads, weed control
Banks property acquisition	167,264	Stream corridor acquisition
East Fork Sevier River	49,141	Stream restoration
Clear Lake, Topaz, Bicknell, Redmond and Pahvant WMAs		
Habitat technician	11,728	WMA maintenance activities
WMA maintenance projects	28,449	WMA maintenance activities
Hurricane Pond fishing pier	27,347	Angler access
Bicknell Bottoms fence	5,880	Boundary fence construction
Indian Peaks WMA maintenance	15,003	Fence construction/maint.
Gates Lake	64,841	Dam maintenance
Parowan Pond	11,806	Community fishery

Southeastern Region

	Expenditures	Description
WMA maintenance projects	\$ 83,028	Fences, signs, roads, weed cont.
Guzzler maintenance	2,640	Water development for wildlife
Ferron Reservoir	265,331	Dam maintenance
Desert Lake WMA		
Seasonal personnel	3,193	WMA maintenance activities
Purple loosestrife control	4,065	Weed control
Monticello Face wildlife guzzlers	3,400	Water development
Gigliotti Pond repairs (liner)	112,396	Community fishery/Helper City

Subtotal for all projects \$2,270,845

Blue Ribbon Fishery Account

	Expenditures	Description
Administration	\$ 17,387	Program administration
Weber River Ranch phase I	41,650	Stream restoration
Stream surveys	24,402	Habitat monitoring
Walker property	3,650	Appraisal
Yuba Res. fish management	20,000	Yellow perch stocking
Strawberry Res. equipment	15,708	Habitat monitoring equipment
Strawberry Res. brochure	1,085	Conservation outreach
East Fork Sevier River	21,997	Stream restoration
Banks property acquisition	176,694	Stream corridor acquisition
Scofield Res. parking area	1,900	Property appraisal
Misc. realty services	1,000	Property appraisal
Wildlife Review mag inserts	12,000	Conservation outreach
Signs	2,784	Help Stop Poaching Program
Subtotal	\$340,257	

Conservation Permit Fund

	Expenditures	Description
Brooke Ranch cons. easement	\$ 75,000	Habitat protection
Mustang Fire seeding II	26,481	Seed
Anthro Mountain guzzlers	702	Water developments
Willow Creek irrig. diversion	15,558	WMA maintenance
Pronghorn guzzler repairs	1,685	Water developments
Timpanogos Foothills Rd closures	8,693	Habitat protection & restoration
Loafer Mountain access	9,068	Sportsman access
Cascade Fire seeding	16,000	Seed
Southern Reg. W. Desert guzzlers	40,955	Water developments
Stanworth property	2,600	Property appraisal
Otter Creek Narrows	3,000	Property appraisal
Panguitch Lake guzzlers	4,917	Water developments
Bulldog Fire seeding (Henry Mtns)	69,084	Chaining and aerial seeding
Habitat improvement equip.	100,742	Pasture aerator, drill, harrow
Great Basin Research Center	340,000	Building construction
Subtotal	\$714,485	

Right: Seed mixing equipment at Great Basin Research Center. The new facilities will increase the DWR's ability to carry out habitat restoration projects statewide.

Big Game Enhancement Fund

	Expenditures	Description
Guzzler Research	\$14,431	DWR/BYU research project
East Manti vegetation mapping	19,238	Habitat inventory
Cheatgrass study phase II	2,917	Habitat research
Exclosure study	12,741	Habitat research
Book Cliffs aspen regen. study	898	Habitat research
Pinyon-juniper mgmt. guidelines	15,000	Bird habitat management pub.
Dataorders	24,293	Habitat monitoring equipment
Subtotal	\$89,518	

Total of all expenditures

Total	\$3,415,105
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HABITAT COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rick Danvir, Big Game
Ernie Perkins, Upland Game
Jim Carter, Aquatics
Debbie Goodman, Non-consumptive/Native Species
Bill James, Chair, DWR Habitat Section Chief
Randy Radant, DWR Aquatics Section Chief
Alan Clark, DWR Wildlife Section Chief
Paul Birdsey, DWR Federal Aid Coordinator

BLUE RIBBON FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Paul Dremann, Chairman (Trout Unlimited)
Jim Carter (Strawberry Anglers Association,
Friends of Strawberry)
George Sommer (BASS)
Tom Ogden (Sportsman)
Wes Johnson (Trout Unlimited)
Randy Radant (Division of Wildlife Resources)
Byron Gunderson (Fish Tech)
Steve Schmidt (Western Rivers Flyfisher)
Rick Rosenberg (Southern Utah Anglers)
Jeff Taniguchi (Uinta Basin Bass Club)
Bryce Bishop (sportsman)
Collin Allan (sportsman)
Lori Batty (Big Foot Fly Shop)

CONSERVATION PERMIT FUNDRAISERS

Sportsmen for Habitat (www.sfwsfh.org)
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (www.fnaws.org)
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (www.rmef.org)
Mule Deer Foundation (www.mdf.org)
California Deer Association (www.caldeer.com)
National Wild Turkey Federation (www.nwtf.org)

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Robert Morgan, Executive Director

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Miles Moretti, Acting Director
John Fairchild, Habitat Conservation Coordinator
Nancy Fennern, Program Accountant
Karen Jones, Office Manager

This annual report is dedicated to the memory of Kevin K. Conway, recent DWR director, whose vision and leadership played a major role in the development of the Habitat Initiative.



Heavy equipment was used to shape banks and relocate the stream channel in the East Fork Sevier River.